



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HELPING THE HOMELESS**  
***Ulster County Doing Its Part, But More Can Be Done***

Kingston, NY (June 23, 2016) – Ulster County Comptroller Elliott Auerbach joins the Office of New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli in announcing the release of a report regarding an overview of homelessness in the State. Auerbach was one of six County Comptrollers that lent his staff and assistance as part of a recent statewide survey aimed at addressing the conditions, responsibilities, and needs of our local shelters. A key finding of the report was that of the 387 facilities outside of New York City reviewed, 320 were determined to be in “adequate” condition despite the presence of less than egregious health and safety issues.

“It’s encouraging to see the homeless facilities in Ulster County were all deemed by Comptroller DiNapoli’s auditors to provide the basic level of habitability, which demonstrates our local dedication to some of our most vulnerable residents,” said Auerbach. “Still, it is clear from this study that ‘adequate’ isn’t good enough and that conditions need to be improved everywhere. I’d like to thank the Comptroller for tackling this important issue in his thorough report, and I offer my full support in his continuing efforts to help ensure that every New Yorker has a clean and safe place to sleep at night.”

Recommendations stemming from the report focused on building a more formidable statewide database of shelters, shoring up the oversight of transient shelters by urging more state and local coordination, increasing the monitoring of facilities that operate without public aid, and addressing the unequal funding of homeless housing that leads to varying degrees of services being provided. Regional Comptrollers and the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance will remain in contact with OSC to ensure that further areas of risk are quickly identified, corrective measures are taken where appropriate, and that best practices are rapidly implemented.

“Nearly 350 Ulster County residents are estimated to be homeless – or sleeping on the streets – on a given night,” said Auerbach. “In my mind, these individuals should not be reduced to living in total squalor while they get back on their feet. We owe a fairly simple duty to our children, victims of domestic violence, chronically disabled, and other special needs populations to ensure that they have a warm bed and leak-free roof over their heads when they need it most.”

The OSC “Homeless Shelters and Homelessness in New York State” report may be found at the following link: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/audits/allaudits/093016/16d3.pdf>

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